

Station 1:

Famed singer-songwriter John Lennon founded the Beatles, a band that impacted the popular music scene like no other before, or since.

Synopsis

John Lennon was born on October 9, 1940, in Liverpool, England. He met Paul McCartney in 1957 and invited McCartney to join his music group. They eventually formed the most successful songwriting partnership in musical history. Lennon left the Beatles in 1969 and later released albums with his wife, Yoko Ono, among others. On December 8, 1980, he was killed by a crazed fan named Mark David Chapman.

Forming the Beatles

Elvis Presley's explosion onto the rock music scene inspired a 16-year-old Lennon to create the skiffle band called the Quarry Men, named after his school. Lennon met Paul McCartney at a church fete on July 6, 1957. He soon invited McCartney to join the group, and the two eventually formed one of the most successful songwriting partnerships in musical history.

McCartney introduced George Harrison to Lennon the following year, and Harrison and art college buddy Stuart Sutcliffe also joined Lennon's band. Always in need of a drummer, the group finally settled on Pete Best in 1960.

When the band broke up, Lennon left the Beatles in September 1969, just after the group completed recording *Abbey Road*. The news of the break-up was kept secret until McCartney announced his departure in April 1970, a month before the band released *Let It Be*, recorded just before *Abbey Road*.

Lennon was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1987, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1994.

Station 2:

Sir Paul McCartney was a member of the Beatles and is still one of the most popular solo performers of all time.

Synopsis

Paul McCartney was born June 18, 1942, in Liverpool, England. His work as a singer/songwriter with the Beatles in the 1960s helped transform popular music into a creative, highly commercial art form, with an uncanny ability to blend the two. He is also one of the most popular solo performers of all time, in terms of both sales of his recordings and attendance at his concerts.

During a decade full of political and social strife, the Beatles expressed the broader hopes of their contemporaries for peace, love and rock 'n' roll with a little rebellion sprinkled in, in the form of British "cheek." McCartney would write more hits for the band than any other member. Songs like "Yesterday," "Hey Jude," "Let It Be," and "Hello, Goodbye" would provide the soundtrack for a generation, with "Yesterday" still the most covered Beatles song of all time.

The Beatles disbanded in 1970, breaking fans' hearts worldwide. However, McCartney had no intention of dropping out of the public eye. He was the first of the Beatles to release a solo album (*McCartney*, 1970), and though critics' reactions were mixed, the album was a hit with the public. Encouraged, McCartney went on to form Wings, a band that would remain popular throughout the '70s, winning two Grammy Awards and churning out multiple hit singles.

Paul McCartney is pop music royalty. For his contributions to global rock 'n' roll culture, he has been knighted, named a fellow at the Royal College of Music, was the recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors and inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, among multitudes of other honors. In 2010, President **Barack Obama** awarded him the Gershwin Prize, the highest award a musician can receive in America. McCartney was the first non-American to receive this honor. Two years later, he was named the MusiCares Person of the Year in honor of his artistic achievement and dedication to philanthropy.

Station 3:

George Harrison was lead guitarist of the Beatles as well as a singer-songwriter on many of their most memorable tracks.

Synopsis

Born on February 25, 1943, in Liverpool, England, George Harrison formed a band with schoolmates to play clubs around Liverpool and in Hamburg, Germany. **The Beatles** became the biggest rock band in the world, and Harrison's diverse musical interests took them in many directions. Post-Beatles, Harrison made acclaimed solo records and started a film production company. He died of cancer in November 2001.

By 1960 Harrison's music career was in full swing. Lennon had renamed the band the Beatles, and the young group began cutting their rock teeth in the small clubs and bars around Liverpool and Hamburg, Germany. Within two years, the group had a new drummer, **Ringo Starr**, and a manager, **Brian Epstein**, a young record-store owner who eventually landed the Beatles a contract with EMI's Parlophone label.

'The Quiet Beatle'

Largely referred to as the "quiet Beatle" Harrison took a backseat to McCartney, Lennon and, to a certain extent, Starr. Still, he could be quick-witted, even edgy.

From the start, the Beatles were a Lennon-McCartney driven band and brand. But while the two took up much of the group's songwriting responsibilities, Harrison had shown an early interest in contributing his own work. In the summer of 1963 he spearheaded his first song, "Don't Bother Me," which made its way on to the group's second album, *With the Beatles*. From there on out, Harrison's songs were a staple of all Beatles records. In fact, some of the group's more memorable songs, such as *While My Guitar Gently Weeps* and *Something*—the latter of which was recorded by more than 150 other artists, including **Frank Sinatra**—were penned by Harrison.

Having grown spiritually and musically since the group first started, Harrison, who was feeling the pangs to include more of his material on Beatles records, was clearly uneasy by the group's Lennon-McCartney dominance. During the *Let It Be* recording sessions in 1969, Harrison walked out, leaving the band for several weeks before he was coaxed to come back with the promise that the band would use more of his songs on its records.

He later started a studio band with Ringo Starr and released the album *All Things Must Pass*.

Station 4:

Ringo Starr first rose to fame in the early 1960s as the drummer for the legendary rock group the Beatles, and is now the richest drummer of all time.

Synopsis

Born Richard Starkey on July 7, 1940, in Liverpool, England, Ringo Starr, known for his easygoing personality, rose to fame in the early 1960s as a member of the legendary rock group the Beatles. Primarily a drummer, Starr also sang and occasionally wrote songs for the group, singing "With a Little Help from My Friends" and writing "Octopus's Garden."

The Beatles

In 1962, he officially joined the Beatles, replacing Pete Best. After their first gig at the Cavern Club in Liverpool, Best's fans were so angry about the switch that they gave Starr a black eye. Eventually, Beatles fans came around, and Starr was accepted, and eventually beloved.

While Lennon and McCartney were widely praised for their songwriting talents, Starr's contributions were not as readily acknowledged. He was known for his strong drumming talents, but he also assisted in the group's creative process and was a key ingredient of the group's emotional stability and good humor, and very likely the reason they stayed together as long as they did. Unlike past drummers who remained firmly in the background, Starr was seen an equal part of the Fab Four. Despite not being a songwriter of the same caliber as his band mates, he was always given one song on each album to star in, and was happy with the arrangement. His unique drumming style was an integral part of what made the Beatles so iconic, and would influence future generations of drummers for decades to come.

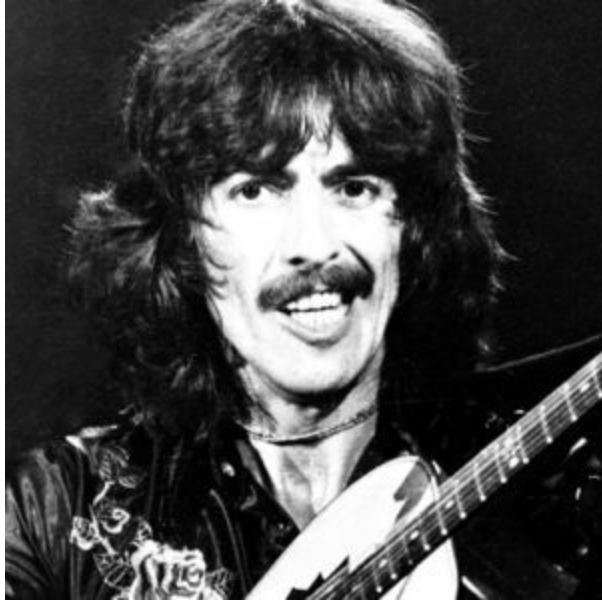
During the recording sessions for *The White Album*, each member of the group started feeling alienated from the others, thinking the other three had a connection he was missing out on. When Starr saw himself increasingly left out of recording sessions (such as "Why Don't We Do It In The Road," which McCartney recorded entirely on his own), he quit the band, becoming the first member to do so. His bandmates realized they had not been clear with him on how talented he was and how valuable, and sent him telegrams calling him the best drummer in the world. When he returned to the studio, he found his drum kit covered in roses, spelling out "Welcome back Ringo." The band was back together, at least for a while.



Ringo Starr



Paul McCartney



George Harrison



John Lennon